



STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA

for Socialism / por el Socialismo

#STRIKETOBER!

The working class rises up

By Stephen Millies

The U.S. working class is waking up angry and defiant. More than 100,000 workers are on strike from coast to coast. Here are some of the biggest battles that broke out during "Striketober":

- 10,000 members of the United Auto Workers are on strike at 14 John Deere plants in Iowa, Illinois, Colorado, Georgia, and Kansas. The manufacturer of construction and agricultural equipment, including tractors, is expected to rake in profits of nearly \$6 billion this year. That hasn't stopped Deere from demanding pension cuts for newly hired workers. Salaried, non-union employees are being forced to cross picket lines to try to break the strike. It's dangerous for these workers to perform jobs that they're not trained for.
- 38,000 Kaiser Permanente health care workers in California and Oregon have authorized a strike. After 19 months of putting their lives on the line fighting COVID-19, they want better staffing and wages that get ahead of inflation.



- 60,000 members of IATSE (the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees) authorized a strike that would have shut down Hollywood. They're sick of working 14 or more hours a day so that movies can be

completed. The workers' solidarity forced the studio bosses to come to a tentative agreement.

- 1,400 Kellogg's cereal workers — members of the Bakery Workers

Continued on page 10



JUSTICE for Ahmaud Arbery 2

Supply-chain crisis? 3

Ruchell Magee 4

NFL's racism/sexism 4

Capitalist climate 5

NOLA union victory 5

South Korean strike 6

CIA targets China 6

#FreeAlexSaab now! 7

U.S. forces in Taiwan 8

Pentagon inflation 9



National Day of Mourning 2021

THURSDAY NOV. 25

12 NOON

Cole's Hill, Plymouth, MA
(hill above Plymouth Rock)

Join us as we continue to create a true awareness of Native peoples and history. Help shatter the untrue image of Pilgrims and the unjust system based on racism, sexism, homophobia and the profit-driven destruction of Earth that they and other European settlers introduced to these shores.

Masks Up, Mayflowers Down!

Please join and check the UAINE facebook group at [Facebook.com/groups/UAINE/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/UAINE/) for updates.

E-mail: info@uaine.org
Website: Uaine.org



Million Worker March Movement contingent at the New Orleans 'Justice after Hurricane Katrina' march in December 2005.
Clarence Thomas on right end of banner.

This season is being called #Striketober. Workers are showing their power by striking, and demanding better conditions. The release of the anthology, "Mobilizing in Our Own Name: Million Worker March" is timely.

Author Clarence Thomas — an African American labor activist, longshore leader, and an organizer of the 2004 Million Worker March — has been speaking at meetings and gatherings around the country. We talked with Thomas on Oct. 17, the anniversary of the Million Worker March in Washington, to get his insights on the labor struggle today.

Struggle-La Lucha: Welcome to Strike-tober. Tell us about your new book.

Clarence Thomas: Thank you for the opportunity to have this conversation. I have been a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Workers (ILWU) Local 10 for 31 years. Though retired from the waterfront, I'm still in the struggle. After I finished the book, I first reached out to the ILWU Local 10 members. I introduced the book at the Local 10 commemoration of Juneteenth

and at a Labor Fest program on July 10 where I did a book signing and reading for union members and the community.

There are Local 10 members that are featured in "Mobilizing in Our Own Name." For many, it was their first opportunity to meet an author who wrote a book about them and their union. Of course, they're very enthusiastic about the book.

Since then, most of my interactions have been through Zoom. In the past

several weeks, I've begun to travel to events. I attended and sold books at the Teamsters Women's Leadership Conference that took place in Las Vegas, Nevada. We met with workers from across the country: Louisville, Kentucky; Houston, Texas; Seattle, Washington; New York City; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and from Phoenix, Arizona. It was the first time that we had a chance to meet workers in one location from various parts of the country.

The Teamsters National Black Caucus (TNBC) invited us to the women's conference. They played a very important role in organizing the 2004 Million Worker March. Brother Chris Silvera who is the longest serving principal officer in the Teamsters, heads up Teamsters Local 808 in Long Island City, New York. Local 808 members are responsible for maintaining the track at Metro-North. Chris Silvera was the East Coast coordinator of the Million Worker March (MWM) along with sister Brenda Stokely from AFSCME DC 1707.

Continued on page 2

Justice for Ahmaud Arbery! Lynched for jogging while Black

By Stephen Millies

Philando Castile was killed by a Minnesota cop for Driving While Black. Trayvon Martin was killed by wannabe cop George Zimmerman in Florida for Walking While Black.

Ahmaud Arbery was killed by three white vigilantes in Georgia for Jogging While Black.

The 25-year-old Arbery was running near his home when he was shot on Feb. 23, 2020, in the Satilla Shores neighborhood just outside Brunswick, Ga. On that Sunday afternoon retired police officer Gregory McMichael spotted the former high school football star jogging and decided he must be a burglar.

McMichael grabbed his son Travis and got into a pick-up truck that had a license plate decorated with the confederate flag. Together they confronted Arbery with a .357 Magnum handgun and a shotgun.

A neighbor of the McMichaels, William Bryan, Jr., joined the posse in his own truck and videoed the killing. Bryan also allegedly struck Arbery with his truck.

Ahmaud Arbery's mother, Wanda Cooper, was informed of her son's death by a police investigator. The cop said that Arbery was involved in a burglary and was killed by a homeowner — a complete lie.

Bryan's video showed Ahmaud Arbery running when he's intercepted by the McMichaels. Gregory McMichael is seen standing in the truck bed with a gun.

Arbery tried to run around the truck but he was stopped by Travis McMichael. Shots are fired and Ahmaud Arbery fell to the ground.

As civil rights lawyer Ben Crump said, "You look on that video, and it's like it was a hunting party," Crump



Protest at the Glynn County Courthouse in Brunswick, Georgia.

is an attorney for Ahmaud Arbery's father, Marcus Arbery.

It then took 74 days for the police to arrest McMichaels and another two weeks to lock-up Bryan.

Gregory McMichael is actually proud of killing Ahmaud Arbery. "You've heard the saying that no good deed goes unpunished?" McMichael said on a phone call from jail. "Yeah, that's the shining example right there," referring to the Black man's death.

A 21st century lynching

The three killers of Ahmaud Arbery are now on trial in Brunswick. Linda Dunikoski came from Marietta, Ga. to be the prosecutor.

The only reason the killers were brought to court was because millions of people across the country joined the Black Lives Matter protests. The deaths of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor in Louisville and George Floyd in Minneapolis ignited this upsurge.

Jackie Johnson, the local District

Attorney in Glynn County — where the shooting took place — had to drop the case since her office had employed Gregory McMichael. She was defeated for reelection and has been indicted for attempting to cover-up Arbery's death.

Another DA, George Barnhill in Waycross, Ga., also had to exit because of a similar conflict. He shared Gregory McMichael's belief that he had a licence to kill.

Barnhill urged the police department in Glynn County not to arrest Ahmaud Arbery's killers. The prosecutor maintained there wasn't "probable cause" to arrest the McMichaels since they were pursuing a "burglary suspect."

The McMichaels are claiming they were trying to make a "citizen's arrest" of Ahmaud Arbery. Georgia's "citizen's arrest" law was passed in 1863 during the Civil War to capture enslaved Africans who were trying to escape.

One hundred twenty-nine years before the killing of Ahmaud Arbery,

Wesley Lewis and Henry Jackson were lynched just outside Brunswick on Feb. 21, 1891. According to the Marshall Project, the two Black men "were hanged from a tree, ridled with more than 1,000 bullets, then left on display for thousands of white spectators to view."

There were more than 500 documented lynching victims in Georgia. Ahmaud Arbery's death was a lynching as well.

The unfinished revolution

Brunswick is on Georgia's Atlantic Coast. It's near the Sea Islands that stretch 245 miles from Florida to South Carolina.

On Jan. 16, 1865, Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman issued field order No. 15, which confiscated the abandoned plantations. The 400,000 acres were to be given to freed Africans in 40-acre plots as a tiny down payment on reparations.

President Andrew Johnson, who did nothing to stop thousands of Black people from being killed by the Ku Klux Klan, overturned Sherman's order later that year. Northern capitalists grabbed much of the land instead to build luxury estates. Brunswick, Ga., was the stopping-off point to these resorts.

The U.S. Civil War was an unfinished revolution. Instead of land and freedom, Black people were lynched and forced to be sharecroppers.

Seventy miles from Brunswick, Troy Davis was framed in Savannah for killing a police officer. Despite virtually every witness recanting their testimony, Davis was executed on Sept. 21, 2011.

Ten years later, justice for Ahmaud Arbery also means remembering Troy Davis, Henry Jackson, Wesley Lewis and all the other victims of lynch terror. □

'Mobilizing in our own name'

Interview with labor activist and author Clarence Thomas

Continued from page 1

International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) General President, James P. Hoffa, wrote a letter praising the book and discussed its importance in terms of building labor solidarity. He expressed that the concerns of workers addressed at the Million Worker March (MWM) in 2004, are even more relevant today. Hoffa's support for the book, which features the Teamsters, is one of the reasons why we are able to reach out to IBT members all over the country.

Struggle-La Lucha: The book's title — "Mobilizing in Our Own Name" — tell us more.

Clarence Thomas: Oct. 17, 2021, is the 17th anniversary of the 2004 Million Work March Mobilization in Washington D.C. on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. The name of the MWM book, "Mobilizing in Our Own Name," is based on the premise that workers cannot depend on bourgeois politicians to address the issues of systemic racism, income inequality, corporate greed, work-

ers' rights, universal health care, slashing the military budget, ending the murder of African Americans and other people of color. Today, the contradictions that are precipitated by the crisis of capitalism are greater than they were in 2004.

The MWM anthology is about radical African American trade unionists in one of the most renowned radical labor organizations of the world, the ILWU Local 10. They defied the Democratic Party and the AFL-CIO, to mobilize the Million Worker March.

As we relate the story of MWM, organized 17 years ago, to what's happening today, it is prophetic. Workers, for too long, have been put into a straitjacket as it relates to their being able to address their needs, because of their respective labor organizations are subordinate to the Democratic Party.

Struggle-La Lucha: Yes. Now there is a strikewave across the country

Clarence Thomas: This October, some 100,000 workers from across

the country are withholding their labor at the point of production. No one can speak for workers like workers can speak for themselves. These actions involve workers that are organized, such as the UAW, California nurses, Kellogg's, Nabisco and John Deere. What we're witnessing is not limited to the traditional sectors of industry. Workers are coming out of the global pandemic, which highlighted the income and wealth inequality in this country.

The corporate media and economists measure the success of the economy by the number of jobs that are generated, while ignoring the quality of those jobs. What the corporate sector frames as a labor shortage is more accurately described as a living-wage shortage. It is a pay shortage, a child care shortage, a paid sick-leave shortage, a health care shortage.

In an interview, an African American woman in Battle Creek, Michigan, reportedly said that at Kellogg's, a global company, "while we prepare food for the world, we're

unable to take off from work to feed our children." Kellogg's workers are being told just minutes before the end of their shift that they have to work more hours. This harkens back to the days before we had unions. This is a reflection of the capitalist crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 epidemic.

In California where I live, a multi-billionaire, a right-wing, racist capitalist who owns the Oakland A's, the Gap and other enterprises, wants to build a baseball stadium, a condominium, a hotel, as well as retail and commercial space at the third busiest port on the West Coast. This is an example of the neoliberal model of capitalism, which is a policy that makes it easier for corporations, banks and the rich to exploit the working class. This gentrification will compromise the Port of Oakland and the jobs of essential workers.

Struggle-La Lucha: The ILWU has a history of class struggle, of knowing the power of a strike.

Continue page 3

Supply chain crisis? There's more to that story

By Gary Wilson

Fears of empty shelves and online shortages seem to dominate the daily TV news shows. The reports are completely overblown, as Barron's admits in a report that's blocked for common reading by a paywall. (Barron's is a Dow Jones & Company news magazine; they also publish the Wall Street Journal.)

Barron's notes that year-end shortages in the supply chain are nothing new. "Our conversations with retailers, manufacturers, shippers, and Wall Street forecasters indicate that businesses are learning to cope with bottlenecks," Barron's says.

Moreover, with the reports filling the news shows, toy sales have taken off. The toy industry is reporting that sales have increased by 15% over last year — to \$22.45 billion — and 28% over 2019. And, you may have noticed, toy prices are going up — allegedly because of "short supply."

Supply chain bottlenecks don't originate from COVID-19. The bottlenecks were introduced back in the 1970s by what is called "just in time" manufacturing. Manufacturers no longer have big inventories of parts. For global manufacturers, everything is now "off-shored." Everything from parts to completed products are made globally and then shipped to where they are needed.

With the anarchy of capitalist production, it's never known what will be needed or when — not overall for the whole economy. Of course, Ford Motor Co. knows what computer chips it wants and when it wants them for F-150 pickup production. But does that matter if more of Chrysler's Ram pickups are being sold and use the parts that are most needed? That's the anarchy of capitalism.

Attack on longshore workers

Besides a chance to raise prices, there's another game hidden in the shipping bottleneck on the West Coast that's been the highlighted image on the TV news.

International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 President Trent Willis says that there is no backlog of ships at the Port of Oakland, the third-busiest port on the West Coast. Local 10 is an African American-led labor union that is world-renowned for its militant and just struggles, including stopping the loading and unloading of ships from apartheid South Africa and Israel.

"I want to make something absolutely clear: The supply chain backup on the West Coast has been inaccurately reported," Willis said in a Labor Video interview.

"It's being inaccurately reported that this backup is all up and down



ILWU Local 10 President Trent Willis at a rally in Oakland, Calif., for protective equipment for essential workers, April 20, 2020.

the whole coast. Why are ocean carriers refusing to use the Port of Oakland to unload container ships with 70 to 80 ships backing up in the ports of LA?" Willis asks.

"They could be playing some kind of game, you know. We have our contract negotiations starting up in 2022."

And they want to gentrify the Port of Oakland. John Fisher, the multi-billionaire, right-wing, racist capitalist who owns the Oakland A's, the Gap and other enterprises, wants to build a baseball stadium, a condominium, a hotel, retail and commercial space there. This gentrification

would compromise the Port of Oakland and the jobs of the dockworkers.

Meanwhile, in Los Angeles and Long Beach, the shipping backup is being used to force the dockworkers to go 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The big shipping operators have been demanding a 24/7 work schedule for years. The ILWU has resisted this, in part, because it creates a more hazardous work environment. Now they are being forced to accept it.

Even though the union has agreed to the 24/7 schedule, the shipping companies are still boycotting the Port of Oakland. □

'Mobilizing in our own name'

Continued from page 2

Clarence Thomas: Henry Bridges, one of the founders of the ILWU, said during contract negotiations that the only reason why the employers were at the bargaining table was because they knew that if they did not collectively bargain with us, we were going to shut them down. They would not be able to make any profits.

That was over 80 years ago. Nothing has changed. Workers feel like they're working harder. They also feel that they have put their lives on the line during this pandemic, that they have not been protected. And that after all that they have been through, they have realized that they have to stand up and fight back.

This isn't some kind of an official country-wide strike effort. As a matter of fact, it's been called an unofficial General Strike. This is not something that has been called for by the leadership of the AFL-CIO whose agenda is not consistent with the needs of the rank-and-file. We, in labor, are not the junior partners of the Democratic Party.

Struggle-La Lucha: Is this what you call organizing in our own name?

Clarence Thomas: Yes! Workers must have their own agenda. They do not want to have endless wars, to live in a country where there are no living wages. Workers want to have universal health care that is not dependent on the health care policies with their jobs. Because even when workers are unemployed, they are still

workers. Workers want to be able to form a union, to send their children to college, to purchase a home. Workers do not need to be fired at the whim of a boss. They want to live in a country where there's clean water and air, and not have to deal with the impact of global warming caused by corporate greed.

The corporate media, which is very, very powerful in this country, can form attitudes that lead workers to behave against their own interest. When I viewed the striking white workers at the Battle Creek, Michigan, plant, I could not help but to think how many of them have been caught up in the issue of wearing a mask versus not wearing a mask.

I am bringing that up, because we need to understand how white

supremacy impacts many of our sisters and brothers in the labor movement. When we look at the labor movement today, it is a rarity to find an African American who heads up an International Union.

One case that I know of is Willie Adams, who is the president of the ILWU. Adams recently met with President Biden to talk about the bottleneck of the international supply chain that is impacting workers who are being forced to work 24/7 to be able to move much needed merchandise and cargo across the country.

White supremacy has negatively impacted one of the most important parts of trade unionism, and that is worker solidarity. Today's strikes that we're witnessing across

the country is a very, very positive development. Workers are taking action based upon their own concerns and needs.

There has been a great deal of anti-worker propaganda. We find that many in the white working class thought that Donald Trump was going to do something for them. Well, they found out that he did not. Trump was more committed to making sure that whites are more concerned about being white than having living wages and a pension. These strikes are a blow to white supremacy because they are building multi-racial class solidarity.

"Mobilizing in Our Own Name," the MWM anthology is a prophetic book. It's very important for workers to get the book in their hands. □

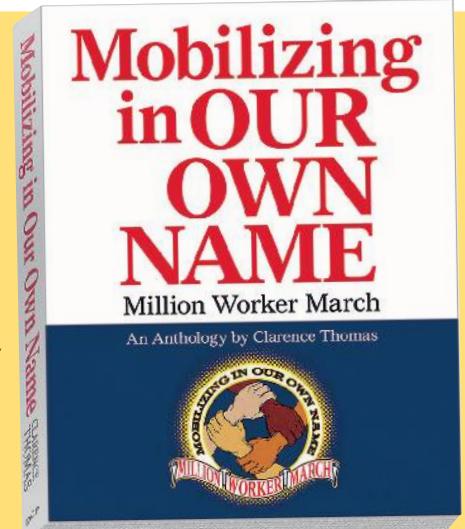
www.MillionWorkerMarch.com 'Mobilizing in Our Own Name'

Struggles documented in news articles, interviews, letters, posters, photos, speeches and video transcripts.

Danny Glover who was a part of the MWM, wrote, "Those of us that are activists in the struggle and are contemporaries of my brother and comrade Clarence 'Buzz' Thomas, whom I've known since our days at San Francisco State, he has done what many of us have talked about but refused to do; write a book! This anthology captures the Million Worker March and so many subsequent struggles that really underscores how ILWU Local 10 continues its long radical history and tradition of struggle. To quote sister Angela Davis, when we both spoke at the Juneteenth 2020 rally at the Port of Oakland, 'Whenever the ILWU takes a stand, the world feels the reverberation.'"

Mobilizing in Our Own Name will be inspiring and instructive to workers and activists in the future.

For those of us that were part of the struggles and actions covered in this book, we realize this is 'our' anthology."



Sirhan Sirhan was convicted of the murder of a Kennedy He could spend less time in prison than this California man

By Thandisizwe Chimurenga

Sirhan Sirhan was convicted of the murder of Democratic presidential candidate Robert Kennedy, brother of former president John F. Kennedy, just after midnight, at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles on June 5, 1968.

On March 30, 1981, John Hinckley Jr. walked up to then-President Ronald Reagan outside of a Washington, D.C., hotel with gun in hand. He fired multiple shots, striking Reagan in the chest, Secret Service agent Timothy McCarthy in the side, District of Columbia police Officer Thomas Delahanty in the neck and White House Press Secretary James Brady in the head, leaving him partially paralyzed.

Hinckley spent 35 years in a mental hospital before being granted conditional release. On Sept. 27, he was freed from court supervision entirely at the age of 66. Sirhan, meanwhile, was deemed eligible for parole on Aug. 27, after 53 years of imprisonment.

In light of the prospect of two convicted presidential shooters walking the Earth as free men, it's worth inquiring why similar consideration isn't being given to Ruchell Magee, a Black man who has been imprisoned in California for more than 50 years.

Magee has neither committed nor been convicted of murder. He was first eligible for parole in 1981, but has been denied release ever since. He is 82 and housed at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville. At his most recent parole hearing in July, Magee was denied parole for another three years. He will be 85 at his next scheduled hearing.

Magee is no threat to society. He

has housing, financial and emotional support networks in place to help him readjust to life on the outside, and yet he remains behind bars.

Why?

Magee came to California in late 1962, a refugee from the Jim Crow justice system of Louisiana. Within six months he would be sentenced to life in prison for a \$10 robbery where no bodily harm occurred. Magee maintained his innocence, arguing that he was illegally imprisoned over a disagreement gone wrong.

Although Magee never went past seventh grade in school, he studied law in prison and learned to file legal documents, eventually securing a reversal of his conviction — but was then retried and convicted a second time.

Magee spent the next few years attempting to legally free himself from what he believed to be a corrupt justice system. His knowledge of the law and his behavior in court (he frequently disrupted proceedings to level charges of racism) made him a thorn in the side of the court.

Those same qualities, however, endeared him to other prisoners who could not afford legal counsel.

This is how Magee wound up on the witness stand of a Marin County courthouse on Aug. 7, 1970. He was testifying in support of a fellow San Quentin Prison inmate when 17-year-old Jonathan Jackson entered the courtroom with a satchel full of guns.

Jackson took several hostages, including the judge and prosecutor. His goal was to free his brother George and two other inmates — collectively known as the "Soledad Brothers" — who were charged with killing a prison guard.

Magee, meanwhile, after eight years of legally trying to overturn his unjust conviction, seized on the moment to free himself. He joined with Jackson in the armed escape and fled the courthouse. Prison guards on the scene opened fire at Jackson's getaway vehicle. The sole survivors of this volley were the prosecutor, who was left paralyzed, three jurors and Magee.

Magee was charged along with activist Angela Davis with conspiracy, kidnapping and murder. Worldwide support aided Davis' acquittal on all charges. Murder charges were eventually dropped against Magee, but he was convicted of kidnapping and sentenced to life in prison.

And he's still there.

The longer a person lives, the more medical care they need. This is as true for prisoners as anyone else. In Magee's case, his care will come from an overburdened and understaffed prison medical system. According to the Public Policy Institute, older prisoners may be a contributing reason for California's astounding prison health care costs, currently the highest in the nation, at more than three times the na-

tional average.

The recidivism rate for prisoners in the U.S. decreases as prisoners get older. It is estimated to be at 5% for persons 50 to 64 and less than 1% by the age of 65, according to Prison Legal News.

Sirhan Sirhan isn't the only older murderer to be recently granted parole in California. Just weeks ago, David Weidert, who served 40 years for burying a developmentally disabled man alive, was approved for parole.

If these men are considered safe for release, what threat does Magee's continued incarceration protect us from?

Years ago, Magee took the name Cinque, after the captured African leader of the 1839 rebellion on the slave ship Amistad that killed the ship's captain. U.S. courts ruled that Cinque and his fellow captives had a right to rebel and fight for their freedom — and the group was freed to return to Africa. Former U.S. President John Quincy Adams supported this result.

Two of Robert Kennedy's sons, meanwhile, support Sirhan Sirhan's bid for freedom.

Magee does not have the support of former presidents or their families. His only chance at freedom lies with the common sense of California Gov. Gavin Newsom, who can release Magee whenever he chooses.

Magee poses no threat to the citizens of California. And his freedom should be given no less consideration than that of the perpetrators of two of America's most infamous acts of violence.

Thandisizwe Chimurenga is a Los Angeles-based freelance journalist and author.

NFL's racism, misogyny and homophobia

By Steven Ceci

In early October, email messages from Jon Gruden, an NFL head coach for 15 seasons, were leaked in the media. On Oct. 11, Gruden resigned as head coach of the Las Vegas Raiders because of what was in the leaked emails.

While Gruden was an ESPN analyst from 2011 through 2018, he frequently spewed racist, homophobic and misogynistic slurs in messages to Bruce Allen, the president of the Washington football team, and other NFL league executives. The leaked emails were from 2011, during the preseason lockout imposed on the players by team owners. In them John Gruden used a racist stereotype to describe DeMaurice Smith, the executive director of the NFL Players Association.

Gruden used homophobic and misogynistic language to disparage Michael Sam, a gay player drafted by the St. Louis Rams in 2014, and Roger Goodell, the NFL commissioner, for welcoming Sam. He also criticized Goodell's efforts to reduce concussions, condemned the use of women as referees and said that Eric



Reid should be fired for joining Colin Kaepernick, the former San Francisco 49ers quarterback, in protesting racism and police terror by kneeling during the national anthem.

Jon Gruden also used derogatory language to describe some NFL owners and coaches as well as the journalists who cover the league. Jon Gruden and Bruce Allen, with some others, exchanged nude pictures of women, including one photo of two Washington Football Team cheerleaders.

Washington Team investigated

How did all this come to light? It came to light because of an investigation into the Washington Football Team and its owner, Daniel Snyder. The Washington Football Team was fined \$10 million by the NFL after a

year-long investigation. The investigation found that the team had cultivated a culture of sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation.

The investigation was not about Gruden. Daniel Snyder and the Washington Football Team have a history of racism and misogyny, starting with the previous team name of more than 80 years that was finally dropped in 2020 because it was a slur toward Native Peoples, as well as the organization's mistreatment of its cheerleaders.

In the summer of 2020, The Washington Post published a report that described the pervasive sexual harassment, bullying and abuse at the Washington Team.

That's when NFL Commissioner Goodell instructed league executives to look at the emails of Daniel Snyder and others over the summer. Those emails included Gruden's racist, sexist, and homophobic exchanges with Snyder. Goodell got a summary of the findings this month, and the league sent the Raiders some of the emails written by Gruden.

On Oct. 8, after The Wall Street Journal reported on Gruden's emails

about the Players Association Director, Smith, the Raiders owner, Mark Davis, issued a statement calling the remarks "disturbing." Gruden apologized and was allowed to keep his head-coaching job for the Raiders. Two days later, just before the Chicago Bears game, Gruden held a team meeting to pre-emptively address the situation. Gruden was trying to maintain his head-coaching job. But the next day the New York Times reported a more detailed account of Gruden's emails. Two days later Gruden resigned.

One might ask why Gruden was allowed to resign instead of being fired? In addition, why haven't other NFL owners, executives and coaches who were also exposed in the emails been fired or reprimanded? Gruden deserves to be fired but the fact is that his resignation has served to cover up the bigger problem.

No justice for Kaepernick, Reid

With high-ranking NFL executives demonstrating their true views in the email messages about players standing up for justice, it is no surprise that Kaepernick and Reid are deemed throughout the league as

Continued on page 9

Capitalism stands in the way of reversing climate crisis

By Scott Scheffer

A lot of today's climatologists may at this point feel like Superman's father and Krypton's leading scientist, Jor-El, who, in the comic book world, tried to warn the Council of Elders that planetary doom was nigh unless they acted.

Earth's scientists have been sounding the alarm about climate change since as early as the 1880's, and much more in the last four decades, but they have been up against corporate-funded climate change denial and action has been limited. The last few years — and especially this summer — may have silenced some of the most vociferous among the deniers.

Raging wildfires, floods, extreme storms, historic drought, are already happening. Some projections have been made of a doubling or tripling of the annual number of days with unlivable heat affecting huge swaths of the U.S. by mid-century. An Aug. 5 Washington Post report says that something called the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), which is a larger ocean current that includes the Gulf Stream, has slowed down because of climate change and could collapse altogether. If it does, the Post reports, "it could bring extreme cold to Europe and parts of North America, raise sea levels along the U.S. East Coast and disrupt seasonal monsoons that provide water to much of the world."

Planet not exploding, yet

No serious scientists believe that we will share the fate of Krypton — the comic book planet exploded — but mitigating and reversing the crisis will have to be done independently of capitalist corporations and their government. Unless that is done, global warming will bring more widespread death and destruction. The poorest countries and populations will bear the brunt of it.

There are measures that can be taken to get humanity on track. They would all be large undertakings. It may take a big combination of some of them or reliance on yet unforeseen methods. It is only the for-profit economic system of capitalism that stands in the way of mounting a serious, no-holds-barred fight against global warming.

It will not be possible to curb or stop CO₂ emissions without an enormous struggle — there should be no doubt about that. But curbing or stopping emissions alone won't solve the problem. To end the crisis it is also necessary to remove the accumulated CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Compare it to a train with 100 rail cars, doing 55 mph that needs to come to a sudden stop. The engineer fully applies the emergency brake, but the train keeps moving for at least a mile. Dr. David Keith, a professor of applied physics and public policy at Harvard, wrote in an Oct. 1 opinion piece in the New York Times that "Average temperatures will stop increasing when emissions stop, but cooling will take thousands of years ... while the heat will stop getting worse, sea level will continue to rise for centuries as polar ice melts in a warmer world."

Fossil fuel industry rules

International pressure has forced some action by the world's richest countries that have amassed staggering riches from fossil fuels, of which the U.S. is number one. Nothing so far, though, has seriously threatened the riches being amassed by the fossil fuel industry. Biden's "Build Back Better" proposals, if enacted, would enable the U.S. to attend the November climate conference in Denmark having lived up to commitments made in Paris in 2015.

After the climate disasters this year, many see even those commitments as inadequate. But there is also pressure pushing in the other

The Tesoro Golden Eagle Refinery in the Bay Area, California. The largest California oil refineries have increased their emissions by 3.5% since 2017



direction, fueled by energy corporations and investors. Biden left out any elements of the Green New Deal proposed by the more progressive wing of the Democratic Party, and he is weakening on his own proposals as bankers, corporations and especially oil giants push back.

Even before this year, actions favored by the ruling class have been half measures that are embraced because they allow energy giants to maintain the status quo.

California had one of the first cap-and-trade markets, which dole out incentives to reduce emissions. A cap gets set on the amount of emissions for every company. Spewing less CO₂ than what is allowed by the cap earns credits that can be sold at auction to companies who can use them to legally emit more CO₂. As useless as it is, some 50 more markets were set up globally since California's.

Cap-and-trade was a concession to energy corporations, as an alternative to mandatory emissions cuts. But ProPublica reports that the state made more concessions under former Gov. Jerry Brown, whose family members are tied to energy companies, by dropping incremental mandatory reductions that were supposed to be part of the deal. The largest California oil refineries, owned by Marathon Petroleum and Chevron, have increased their emissions by 3.5% since 2017, when California's market started.

Carbon Capture is snake oil

Now, big energy, banking and other giant corporations are pouring money into another method of dealing with climate change — carbon

capture, utilization and storage. The technology pulls CO₂ out of the air. One method stores it underground or in the oceans, with the risk of pipeline and storage vessel leaks. Another method sells the extracted CO₂ at a profit to be used in products such as soft drinks, plastics, or, unbelievably, to assist in the process of getting more oil and gas out of the ground.

Carbon capture is expected to grow to about a \$2 trillion industry. No wonder that Elon Musk, Microsoft, Occidental Petroleum and ExxonMobil are throwing billions at it. The technology may become very profitable long before it is capable of making a difference. Currently, the amount of CO₂ that it's capable of removing from the atmosphere is woefully inadequate.

Globally, forty-three billion tons of CO₂ go into the air each year. In 2019, 44 million tons were extracted and stored underground using carbon capture and storage. That is only a tenth of a percent of one year of CO₂ emissions — not coming anywhere near what's needed to remove almost two centuries of CO₂ that has accumulated, and which will continue raising global temperatures for future generations.

U.S. corporations caused 20% of the greenhouse gases that are warming the planet. Those same corporations now regularly use the word "green" to hawk their wares. Of course, using the word isn't a real change. Cap-and-trade markets and carbon capture technologies are what they are doing, because neither threaten the continued profitable extraction of oil and gas. □

Union victory for New Orleans city workers as council ratifies \$15 minimum wage

By Gregory E. Williams

On Oct. 7, the New Orleans City Council ratified a \$15-an-hour minimum wage for city workers, effective in January. This will be \$3.81 more than the paltry \$11.19 minimum currently in place.

Because of sky-rocketing inflation, \$15 dollars doesn't go as far as it did even a few months ago. Nevertheless, the raise is a major victory for the working-class movement here, and will be welcomed by city workers struggling to make ends meet.

As reported in Struggle-La Lucha back in July, the council was forced to move forward when the firefighters' union and allies marched into the chambers on July 1, right in the middle of a session. When put on the spot, the council members voted unanimously that they would find the money for a raise. Now it's official.



When the firefighters marched into the chambers on that day in July, the council was voting on a resolution to require a \$15-an-hour minimum for city contract workers. This was one year after mostly-Black

contracted sanitation workers had gone on strike in the city, carrying out an unprecedented drive for unionization. At the time, this sent shockwaves through New Orleans' big and small bourgeoisie, with the

owners of the garbage-collection company, Metro Services Group, crying to the press. But support for the strike was widespread, and most media coverage was sympathetic.

It should also be noted that in the summer of 2020 — when the sanitation-worker strike was ongoing — thousands of people in the city marched against racist police killings in what was really a country-wide rebellion against white supremacy; the council and mayor were certainly paying attention to these events, as they were embroiled in controversy after New Orleans police used tear gas against protesters marching across the Mississippi River bridge.

All in all, we can conclude that workers can only get concessions from the capitalists and their governments if we organize for militant fightback. □

South Korean labor calls general strike to free union president

By Scott Scheffer

Yang Kyung-soo, the president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) — South Korea's largest and most militant trade union confederation — has been jailed and is on a hunger strike.

A general strike had already been called for Oct. 20, and has now taken on demands to release Yang. Police had attempted the arrest in mid-August at the KCTU headquarters but were fought off by union members and forced to retreat.

Although the Moon Jae-in government rode a wave of support by labor unions, and in particular the KCTU, repression against the labor movement has not changed and is continuing.

Since its foundation in 1995, there have been 13 presidents of the KCTU. All 13 were at one time or another jailed by the U.S.-backed South Korean state.

There has been no international outcry over the arrest, no word of it in the U.S. media. Compare that to what you'd hear if the head of a labor union were arrested in Cuba, China, Nicaragua, Venezuela or any other country that struggles to remain independent. Where are the cries for human rights in South Korea?

Instead, the New York Times writes that South Korean workers have lost "enthusiasm" for strikes. They fail to mention that the KCTU has grown to become the largest trade union confederation based on its history of militant and determined struggle.

The percentage of temporary workers in South Korea is among



PHOTO: KCTU

Korean Confederation of Trade Unions president Yang Kyung-soo waves to supporters while police transfer him to a detention center.

the highest in the world, ranging between 25% and 35% over time, mostly women, children and elderly. Secure, living-wage jobs with benefits are disappearing. Similar to but even more pronounced than the "gig economy" of the U.S., temporary workers in South Korea are forced to work long hours at low wages without even basic benefits.

The pauperization of the working class

The disappearance of jobs with pensions has led to a 50% poverty rate among elderly workers, many of whom are now homeless. This pauperization of a large section of the working class has enabled South Korea's giant corporate monopolies — chaebols — to run roughshod over the lives of the working class. The chaebols dominate the South Korean economy and have an incestuous relationship with U.S. financial institutions.

Claiming that South Korean workers have lost enthusiasm to fight back is not just twisting facts or taking things out of context — it is an out-and-out lie. The U.S. media hasn't reported what happened in South Korea just last summer.

In June, some 2,100 couriers struck against unbelievably long hours and overwork that caused the deaths of 16 union members. They won a cap on hours and several delivery companies have committed to hire more workers to sort packages. During the strike, the workers rallied just blocks away from parliament and the skyscraper headquarters of the chaebols.

Workers at HMM, South Korea's biggest container ship company, carried out a strike that lasted 77 days until the end of August. They won a 7.9% pay increase and incentives of up to 650% of workers' monthly wages.

In August, healthcare workers' threat to strike won many pandemic-related demands including the establishment of a nurse-to-patient ratio; the establishment of at least four public infectious disease hospitals by 2024; a detailed set of nurse deployment guidelines based on the severity of COVID-19 patients by October; and more funding to subsidize those treating contagious diseases, to go into effect in January 2022.

When South Korea's economy collapsed in 1997, representatives from the U.S. arranged an International Monetary Fund "rescue." Some of the biggest U.S. banks, as well as bankers from Europe, swooped in and demanded restructuring in return for a bailout.

The crisis gave the Western banks even more control over the half of the Korean nation that they divided and have dominated and used since the terrible destruction that they carried out in the 1950-53 Korean War. The 1997 restructuring of the South Korean economy was accompanied by a campaign to drive down wages so that the short and long-term loans that the U.S. arranged could be repaid. Those loans were at higher interest rates than the rate at which major global banks normally lend to one another. Now, South Korea's external debt is growing once again and the financial burden is being placed on the working class.

All trade unionists and working-class activists, especially in the United States, should join the call to free Yang Kyung-soo! Solidarity with South Korean workers and the 2021 general strike!

China is not labor's enemy, Wall Street is

Political analyst and activist

Bill Dores says China is no threat to the people in the United States; Wall Street, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and the Pentagon are.

Dores, a writer for Struggle/La Lucha and longtime antiwar activist, made the remarks in an interview with Press TV on Saturday after the CIA launched a new mission center to address what it calls "the most important geopolitical threat" posed by China.

CIA Director William Burns said in a statement last week that the new unit, called the China Mission Center, will "further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government."

Burns said that his agency will still focus on other threats as well, including those emanating from Russia, North Korea and Iran.

The CIA's renewed attention to China is the latest evidence of the Biden administration's focus on Beijing as its main foreign policy target.

Since taking charge of the White House earlier this year, the Biden administration has been directing resources toward countering China.

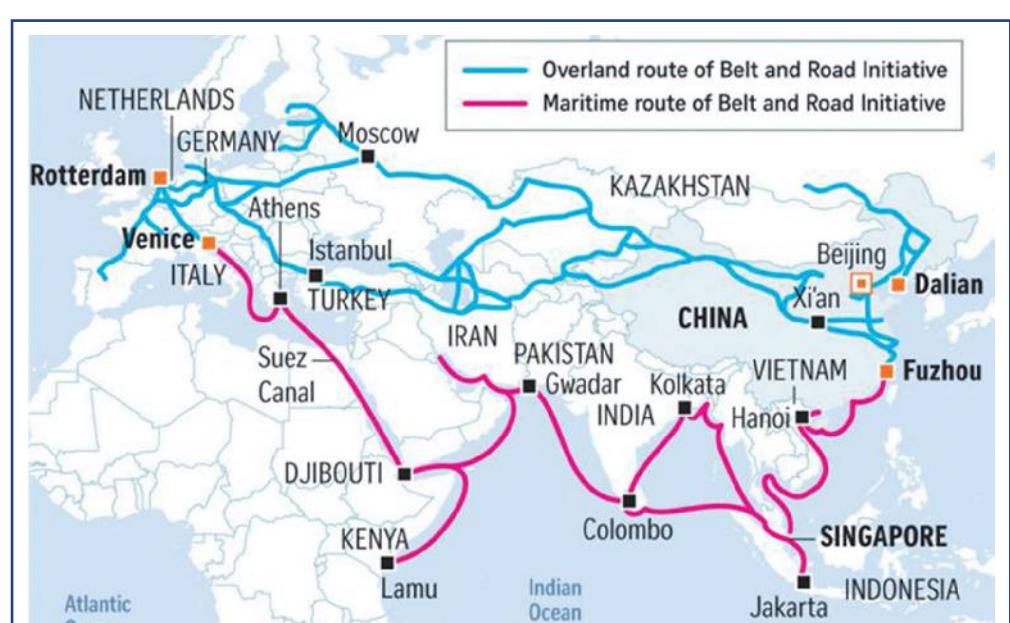
Why is CIA targeting China?

"The CIA is grabbing more tax money to start a 'mission center' aimed at China, which it calls the 'most important geopolitical threat we face.' This is ominous news, considering the agency's history of fabricating evidence to start wars, e.g. Iraq's nonexistent 'weapons of mass destruction,'" Dores commented to Press TV.

"U.S. troops have left Afghanistan. But not a dime has been slashed from the bloated U.S. military budget. Indeed, it's being increased to \$778 billion from \$753 billion to face the alleged 'Chinese threat.' That's more than the combined military budgets of China, India, Russia, Britain, Saudi Arabia, Germany, France, Japan, South Korea, Italy and Australia," he added.

"It's also been revealed that U.S. Special Forces have been operating secretly on Taiwan for two years. Meanwhile, the U.S. Congress will not pass the Build Back Better Act to modestly extend our social safety net," he added.

"The People's Republic of China has five times the population of the United States. But it spends only \$258 billion on its military. China's forces are deployed in or around the borders and coasts of China. By no



China's Belt and Road Initiative.

stretch of the imagination is China threatening the U.S. militarily. Why would it? For what gain?" he asked.

"So, what the Sam Hill [hell] is a 'geopolitical threat.' It's a twisted concept based on the twisted premise that the United States, with 4% of the world's population, should dominate the world politically and economically. And that really means the billionaires and millionaires that Occupy Wall Street protesters called the 'One Percent,'" he stated.

China's economic 'threat' to U.S.

"China's real 'threat,' in the minds of the U.S. corporate ruling class, is economic. China produces more than the United States, and its economy is growing much faster," the analyst said.

"It has achieved this not by destroying the economies of other countries with war and sanctions, but by growth and trade. China's Belt

Continued on page 7

Biden kidnaps Venezuelan diplomat: #FreeAlexSaab now!

By Greg Butterfield

The Biden administration on Oct. 16 kidnapped Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab from the West African country of Cape Verde, in blatant violation of international law. Under U.S. pressure, Saab had already been imprisoned and tortured in Cape Verde for 16 months.

"On a flight chartered by the [U.S.] Department of Justice, in which the Cape Verdean authorities had no control that could guarantee the safety of the Venezuelan diplomat, because they do not have a bilateral extradition treaty with the North American nation, Alex Saab arrived Saturday night and was transferred to a high-security prison in Miami," teleSUR reported.

Saab is Venezuela's Deputy Ambassador to the African Union, as well as an official representative to negotiations with the right-wing opposition planned in Mexico. Under the Vienna Convention, he has diplomatic immunity from arrest, even in wartime.

None of that matters to the representatives of the arrogant, racist U.S. empire, which is willing to starve and deprive millions of Venezuelans of medicines during a global pandemic, using sanctions aimed at destroying the pro-socialist Bolivarian government of President Nicolas Maduro.

Saab was expected to appear in a Miami court for arraignment on Oct. 18. In protest of the kidnapping, the Venezuelan government suspended negotiations with the U.S.-backed opposition. Jorge Rodriguez, leader of the Bolivarian government delegation, declared the decision "an expression of our deepest protest

against the brutal aggression against the person and the investiture of our delegate Alex Saab Moran."

The kidnapping of Ambassador Saab is yet another example, if one is needed, that in international affairs Joe Biden is ploughing full steam ahead with the warmongering policies he inherited from Donald Trump. On Venezuela, like China, there is not a whisker's difference between these imperialist rulers.

Venezuela denounces attack

The Venezuelan government issued this statement Oct. 16:

"The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela condemns the United States Government's kidnapping of Venezuelan diplomat Alex Saab, in complicity with Cape Verdean authorities, who tortured him and arbitrarily held him prisoner for 491 days, without an arrest warrant of due process, in violation of the laws of Cape Verde and the Vienna Convention. This crime was condemned by the United Nations and various countries around the world."

"The information has been confirmed by the diplomat's family members who were recently forbidden to enter the country."

"As is widely known, Alex Saab is a permanent representative of our government at the Dialogue Table being held in Mexico with the Venezuelan opposition, through the facilitation of the Kingdom of Norway and the accompaniment of the Russian Federation and the Kingdom of the Netherlands; therefore this crime is also an attack against the good development of the negotiations."

"The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela deplores



People protest the U.S. kidnapping of Alex Saab in Caracas, Venezuela, Oct. 18.

this serious violation against the human rights of a Venezuelan citizen, who is invested as a diplomat and as a representative of our country to the world. This fact sets a dangerous precedent for international law.

"We hold the authorities of Cape Verde and the Government of President Biden responsible for the life and physical integrity of Alex Saab and as a sovereign nation we shall reserve the actions we will take accordingly."

"We are grateful for the solidarity of the noble people of Cape Verde and Africa, as well as the U.S. and world social movements, who have raised their voices in rejection of this crime. The struggle for the dignity of this innocent man, who is protected by international law, shall continue and intensify."

Negotiating food for the people

Saab was arrested by Interpol and Cape Verdean authorities on June 12, 2020, during a stopover to refuel on the island nation. He was on his way to visit Iran — another country whose independence causes U.S. bosses and politicians to foam at the mouth — to secure food and medical aid for the Venezuelan people.

President Maduro pinpointed the reason for Saab's arrest on Sept. 23: "They kidnapped Alex Saab and have done everything possible to destroy the Local Supply and Production Committees," known by the Spanish

acronym CLAP, which provides food assistance to more than 7 million Venezuelan families affected by U.S. sanctions.

The arrest warrant against Saab is based on U.S. Treasury Department claims that the CLAP program is a "money laundering operation." The U.S. has presented no evidence to back up its charges, winning delays each time it was due to back up the charges in court.

"The Swiss government, after a two-year investigation into Saab's transactions with Swiss banks, concluded on March 25 that there was no money laundering," noted the Orinoco Tribune.

But an Oct. 1 article in the "capitalist tool" Forbes magazine revealed that U.S. officials hope to force Saab to "shed light on Venezuela's post-sanction economic work."

This means U.S. officials hope to force Saab to reveal information they can use to undermine the solidarity networks that have developed between Venezuela and some of the three dozen other countries living under illegal U.S. sanctions — which include an estimated one-third of the world's population.

Forbes reported, "Much to the annoyance of the Trump and Biden administrations, Saab, a creative and capable businessman, found a way to navigate Venezuelan trade in sectors

Continued on page 8

China is not labor's enemy, Wall Street is

Continued from page 6

and Road Initiative has greatly weakened the stranglehold Wall Street banks once held on the world economy. An article in the U.S. magazine Foreign Policy whined that China is 'whittling away' at the murderous 'sanctions regime' the U.S. and West Europe use to 'punish' countries that defy their dictates," he explained.

"U.S. corporations do of course invest in China. They make a lot of money there. But they can't dictate to the Chinese government the way U.S. oil companies dictated to the Shah of Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Or the way they dictate to their paid servants in the White House and the Capitol today," he observed.

"Politicians and news media tell working-class people in the United States that China's growth is somehow a threat to our well-being. They conceal the fact that China's dynamic growth is the biggest single factor staving off a global economic collapse," he said.

"Yet it is their own Wall Street masters who have shut down plants all over this country and foreclosed on millions of homes. It is they who used the technological revolution as a weapon to drive down wages and destroy millions of jobs," Dores said.

Washington's 'hate China' campaign

"Washington raises several phony issues in its 'hate China' campaign. One is the alleged persecution of the Uighur people in Xinjiang Province. There's nothing but hypocrisy here," the analyst said.

"If this claim were true — and I've seen no reliable evidence that it is — Washington would be the last to care. The United States leads the world in mass incarceration and murder by police," he noted.

"According to the Equal Justice Initiative, 'Millions of Americans are incarcerated in overcrowded, violent, and inhumane jails and prisons that do not provide treatment, education, or rehabilitation.' The majority are from the oppressed Black, Latin and Native nations targeted by police," he said.

"Among the incarcerated are dozens of political prisoners, such as Mumia Abu-Jamal, Leonard Peltier and Jamil Abdullah Al Amin, who have spent decades behind bars on frame-up charges," he stated.

"Last year's Black Lives Matter uprising highlighted the extent of racist police murder in the United States. Between 1980 and 2018, U.S. police killed more than 30,000 people. Half of those killings were

misclassified, according to a study published in the Lancet medical journal," he said.

U.S. supports 'ethnic cleansing and murder of Palestinian people'

"We also cannot forget that Washington not only supports but subsidizes the ethnic cleansing and murder of Palestinian people by the racist state of Israel, including the mass imprisonment of 2 million people in the giant concentration camp called the Gaza Strip. The U.S. also has no problem with the oppression of the majority Muslim people of Kashmir by the Indian state," Dores noted.

"The U.S. accuses China of stealing 'intellectual property,' a twisted concept indeed. Perhaps the West should pay China for inventing paper, iron smelting, the seed drill, the compass, rockets, gunpowder and other innovations that made its economic development possible," he said.

"There is the accusation of currency manipulation. But Washington has flooded the world with devalued dollars ever since the Nixon administration took the dollar off the gold standard in the 1970s. The U.S. has long used the dollar as an instrument of financial warfare," he said.

Why is the U.S. Navy in the South China Sea?

"And there is the issue of 'free navigation' in the South China Sea. Which raises the question, what is the U.S. Seventh Fleet doing in the South China Sea anyway? For that matter, why is the U.S. Fifth Fleet off the coast of Iran and the U.S. Fourth Fleet off the coast of Venezuela," Dores asked.

"Every year, ships carry \$3.4 trillion worth of goods through the South China Sea. Most of that is bound to and from China," he said.

"The PRC has no interest in stopping that commerce. It does have an interest in keeping U.S. warships away from its coast and ports," he said.

"For the past seven years, the U.S. Navy has helped Saudi Arabia impose a naval blockade that is starving the children of Yemen. U.S. sanctions, backed by the U.S. Navy, are the main obstacle to commerce between nations in the world today," he said.

"Instead of new CIA mission centers, military bases and fleets of warships and warplanes all over the world, the U.S. should do what China does: Invest in schools, health care, housing, railroads and renewable energy. Bring all the ships, planes, troops and spies home. The world would be a much better and safer place," he concluded.

Source: Press TV

Washington escalates: U.S. special forces secretly operating for past year in Taiwan

By Gary Wilson

Unless the U.S. government promptly removes its military forces from China's Taiwan province, China may send in its own military force to defend its territory, declared an Oct. 8 editorial in Global Times, the Communist Party of China's daily newspaper.

Global Times explains: "We must resolutely define the deployment of U.S. troops in Taiwan as an 'invasion.' The mainland has the right to carry out military strikes against them at any time. We will not make any promises over their safety. Once a war breaks out in the Taiwan Straits, those U.S. military personnel will be the first to be eliminated. Through such a declaration, we must make Washington understand that it is playing a dangerous game that is destined to draw fire onto itself and it is risking the lives of young U.S. soldiers."

On Oct. 7, the Wall Street Journal reported that about two dozen U.S. special operations and support troops were "secretly operating in Taiwan to train military forces there for at least a year." The Global Times points out that "since the U.S. has exposed the news through anon-

ymous officials, it has taken a step forward to undermine, from covertly to semi-overtly, the key conditions for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Chinese mainland and the U.S."

The U.S. government officially recognizes that Taiwan is a province of China, not a separate nation. Therefore, what the Biden administration is now doing — secretly sending special forces into the Chinese province — is in violation of both U.S. and international law.

Taiwan is a crucial issue. The struggle over Taiwan, always considered to be a province of China, has been ongoing since 1949, when the Chinese People's Liberation Army drove U.S. puppet Chiang Kai-shek and his Nationalist Army from the mainland as it retreated to Taiwan under the protection of the Pentagon.

Shanghai Communiqué: One China

The U.S. agreed to surrender the Chinese province of Taiwan, as promised in the Shanghai Communiqué, on Feb. 28, 1972.

The U.S. signed a promise that "The United States acknowledges that all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is a part of China.



A Taiwan National Police Agency Special Operations force training in Taipei.

The United States Government does not challenge that position. It reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves."

The Trump administration moved toward dropping most of the long-standing policies toward China and Taiwan, even suggesting the possibility of granting Taiwan official recognition and an embassy in Washington.

The Biden administration has not changed any of the Trump policies toward China.

A Democratic congresswoman, Rep. Elaine Luria, in an op-ed published in the Washington Post Oct. 11, "Congress must untie Biden's hands on Taiwan," called for an act that would allow the president to bypass Congress to declare war on China.

The Stars and Stripes daily newspaper that's issued from the Pentagon headlined Oct. 12: "Retired Marine colonel says U.S. should weigh nuclear war with China over Taiwan."

Ruling class behind anti-China campaign

Has the rapprochement between Washington and Beijing, as represented by the Shanghai Communiqué, ended?

This breakup is not just the doing

of Donald Trump or Joe Biden. It flows from the fear of the predominant sections of the U.S. ruling class that the attempt to overthrow Chinese socialism from within has failed, just as the previous military aggression from 1949 to 1975 also failed.

In the 1970s when China "opened up," the giant capitalist monopolies went charging into the Chinese markets. But the strong socialist core of the People's Republic of China has held on. And the stronger China becomes, the more Wall Street fears for its economic dominance and the more the Pentagon fears for its military dominance.

On Feb. 25, China's President Xi Jinping announced that 853 million Chinese people have lifted themselves out of poverty since 1981 thanks to large-scale interventions from both the Chinese state and the Communist Party of China.

China's technological and economic strength — as well as its remarkable response to the coronavirus (4,636 total deaths compared to more than 718,000 in the U.S.) — has raised a new respect for socialism.

U.S. ruling class hostility to China's struggle to build a socialist society is behind the New Cold War and the real threat of hot war. □

Biden kidnaps Venezuelan diplomat: #FreeAlexSaab now!

Continued from page 7

like food, oil and gold between the cracks of U.S. oversight.

"For many in Venezuela, this [Saab's activities] is not criminal — Saab is a hero, and his efforts overseas are the actions of a man trying to feed and house the hungry and homeless."

Readers are urged to see Roger D. Harris' comprehensive report at Orinoco Tribune for more details.

Acts of war

The United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States, the African Bar Association, and governments around the world called on Cape Verdean authorities to release Saab and protested that there was absolutely no legal basis to extradite him to the U.S. More than 15,000 people signed an international petition to free the Venezuelan diplomat.

This is far from the first time Washington has illegally kidnapped foreign leaders and officials. Saab's extradition immediately brings to mind the March 1, 2004, kidnapping of Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by U.S. soldiers, who deposed him in a coup d'état and put him on a plane to South Africa.

In recent years the U.S. has escalated these attacks.

Simon Trinidad, international representative of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) and an official member of the negotiating team at peace talks in Havana, was extradited to the U.S. Despite all bogus drug trafficking charges being dropped

after three trials, Trinidad was nevertheless convicted of "conspiracy" and is today imprisoned under the torturous Special Administrative Measures (SAMS) at a Federal prison in Colorado.

Then there was the years-long siege of journalist and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy in London. Assange similarly has been tortured in isolation by British prison authorities and faces extradition to the U.S., even though the charges used to justify his arrest were dropped long ago.

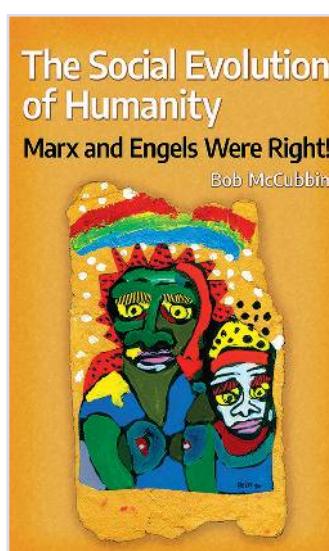
And there are more cases related to the fight against sanctions, where foreign nationals are charged with violating provisions of the (illegal) U.S.-imposed sanctions on countries it seeks to destroy. Such was the case of Meng Wanzhou, a Chinese businessperson who was detained in Canada for nearly three years before finally winning the right to return home to China in September.

And of course, there was the Trump regime's illegal seizure of the Venezuelan Embassy in Washington, D.C., in 2019, including the arrest of four embassy defenders.

Sanctions are an act of war. So are violations of the international and the universally recognized rights of diplomats. The U.S. empire's political gangsters carry out these lawless and vile acts because, they laugh to themselves, "Who will dare to stop us?"

We must dare — to struggle and to win.

Free Alex Saab! Free all political prisoners of U.S. imperialism — domestic and international! □



Paperback or Kindle
At: tinyurl.com/vwarcv7

The Social Evolution of Humanity
Marx and Engels were right!
Bob McCubbin

This study of the evolution of humanity focuses on human social/sexual relations and, in particular, the changing social status of women. It offers a selection of scientific evidence that updates and augments the viewpoint expressed in Frederick Engels' masterful work, *'Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State.'*

McCubbin is the author of *'Roots of Lesbian and Gay Oppression: A Marxist View.'* First published in 1976, during the first upsurge of the modern LGBTQ2S movement, McCubbin's unparalleled achievement was to offer a historical analysis of when, where, why and how LGBTQ2S oppression developed.

Propping up the U.S. military is driving the economy down

By Gary Wilson

Talk about inflation. On Oct. 18, a Senate panel approved an annual Pentagon budget that's at least \$29 billion more than last year and \$10 billion more than requested.

Most of the increase is earmarked for "equipment purchases" — a big, fat giveaway to the military-industrial complex.

Whatever happened to the necessity to limit spending, to cut back government spending?

The Pentagon's budget over nine years, from 2011 to 2020, has been \$9.1 trillion. Funding for the Pentagon constitutes most, but not all, U.S. military spending.

The CIA budget, for example, is unpublished and uncounted.

The U.S. spends more on its military than the next 10 countries combined (alphabetically): Brazil, Britain, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Russia, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

Congress, meanwhile, can't come up with \$350 billion a year — which is \$3.5 trillion over 10 years — to fund President Joe Biden's Build Back Better Act.

Of course, there's very little about the military budget being reported in the major media. The military budget isn't open to debate or dispute. Even the efforts of Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Sen. Bernie Sanders to slow down military spending go mostly unreported.

War has ended?

Why did the Pentagon budget need to get a big increase, plus an extra, mystery \$10-billion bonus?

The Afghanistan war has ended. Yet military spending is higher than ever and expanding at a faster rate than ever.

Some say the big spending is meant to counter the economic crisis aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. One sometimes hears that it was the military buildup for World War II that finally ended the Great Depression of the 1930s.

But military spending was already at record highs when the recession of 2020 hit, so it clearly didn't pre-

vent an economic downturn.

Of course, the 2020 recession was more than the usual cyclical downturn. But there were many signs a recession was developing before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

Industrial production in most countries had already ceased to rise. The U.S. Federal Reserve System had already initiated an "easing" cycle — that is, increasing the money supply — in an attempt to contain the incipient downturn.

Capitalism's boom and bust

The capitalist boom-and-bust cycle was noted long ago by Karl Marx. While capitalism has changed since Marx wrote, evolving from industrial capitalism to monopoly capitalism, the boom-and-bust cycle has continued.

The domination of capitalism on a world scale means that periodic crises return again and again, each one causing great hardship.

The system's dependence on relentless expansion and its inherent drive to maximize profit rather than meet human needs causes periodic collapses. And the bosses make the workers pay for the collapse.

Marx identified the essence of the periodic crises of capitalism as crises of overproduction very early on, even

in the Communist Manifesto in 1848.

Traditional bourgeois economic theory denied that capitalism could have crises. Bourgeois economist John Maynard Keynes, looking at the catastrophic crisis of the 1930s, may be best known for acknowledging the reality that capitalism can have crises.

Keynes — and the economic policies identified with him — believed the state could intervene to lessen the crises if not eliminate them altogether.

According to Keynes, capitalism does not have crises of overproduction, as Marx had shown. Rather, Keynes argued that it was a crisis of under-consumption that can be resolved by the state stepping in to purchase goods directly, printing money to give people to spend themselves and/or using government deficit spending to put more money into the economy.

Part of the reason Keynes favored ending the gold standard was to allow this to happen more easily.

A stimulant becomes a depressant

Military spending was at first a powerful stimulant to production — a fact that Keynesian economists never tire of noting. The constant and expanding military spending in

the U.S., however, has become a primary cause of inflation, even if that is not acknowledged by the bourgeois economists.

At the same time, military spending represses the expansion of capitalist reproduction.

Economic reproduction is the process whereby the means of production — the raw materials, facilities, machinery and tools used in the production of goods and services — are replaced. Expanded reproduction — or reproduction on an expanded basis — is the economic essence of capitalism.

Under expanded reproduction, the existing means of production are not only replaced, they are expanded. The capitalist must expand capital and machinery — constant capital. If not, there is failure: expand or die.

However, military spending means contracted reproduction. Factories that under normal conditions produce commodities that are used to replace the equipment of existing factories or build new factories are instead producing the means of destruction.

The economy rots from within by destroying the productive forces, including, in the case of actual warfare, the most important productive force — the workers. □



Members of the U.S. Army 1st Division 9th Regiment 1st Battalion unload heavy combat equipment including Abrams tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles at the railway station near the Pabrade military base in Lithuania, on Oct. 21, 2019.

NFL's racism, misogyny and homophobia

Continued from page 4

persona non grata.

After the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis sparked weeks of militant national protest, the NFL was finally embarrassed into changing its position on issues of race such as the Black Lives Matter movement. Goodell came forward, after being called out by players, to say what he had previously avoided: "Black Lives Matter." He apologized for not doing so before and vowed that the NFL would change.

It was because of the mass movement against racism that Jon Gruden is now out, even though he wasn't fired but instead was forced to resign.

In the wake of the protests and civic unrest of 2020, the league continues to make a big deal of its supposed commitment to supporting

women, LGBTQ2S people and particularly African Americans. This year, the NFL kept up the practice of painting feel-good phrases like "End Racism" in end zones and of allowing players to wear approved slogans like "Black Lives Matter" on the back of helmets.

Even though the league gives lip service against racism, the numbers demonstrate the NFL's hypocrisy. Black players make up close to 70% percent of the NFL rosters, including most of the league's biggest stars. However, there are only five Black general managers of teams. There are no Black team owners with ma-

jority shares. In addition, only three out of 32 head coaches are Black, even though there were eight head coach vacancies from last season.

Ironically, the Raiders under the ownership of Al Davis was one of the most progressive teams in the league. In 1989, the Raiders hired Art Shell, the first Black head coach in the league's modern era. The Raiders also hired the first Latinx head coach, Tom Flores, in 1979. The Raiders in 1997 also hired Amy Trask, the first woman to become an executive for a NFL team.

After the hiring of Art Shell 32 years ago, not much has changed.

Powerful, wealthy white men have by far the most control over professional football. How they act, whom they appoint and hire, what they say — and in this case the casual jokes and demeaning put-downs — underscore the lie of the league's public relations displays. These are the men who make the day-to-day decisions in football. And those emails are where the NFL owners' culture was exhibited.

The league may try to spin and make John Gruden to be just one bad apple but the truth is, the whole NFL ownership and management is rotten to the core. □

Congreso quiere frenar la agroecología en Puerto Rico

Según el último censo, en 10 años se redujo la población en casi un 12%. Y mientras creció el número de personas de la tercera edad, la de los jóvenes menores de 18 años bajó casi un 40%.

Tal parece que la política imperialista hacia Puerto Rico es la de exterminarnos a través de la pobreza, la falta de buenos servicios básicos de salud y educación, la falta de trabajos al no haber ningún crecimiento económico que no sea depender de fondos federales luego de una catástrofe, que por cierto aquí no han sido pocas. Porque al terrible Huracán María del 2017, le siguieron terremotos y ahora la pandemia.

Pero la peor catástrofe ha sido la imposición de la Junta de Control Fiscal impuesta por el congreso de EUA para destrozar el país mediante recortes absurdos a los presupuestos de servicios esenciales.

Aparte de las privatizaciones de servicios básicos, intentan destruir el sistema público universitario, la Universidad de PR con sus 11 recintos.

El recinto que más se empeñan en cerrar es el de Utuado. ¿Por qué? Este se especializa en la agricultura. Y en un país-isla que depende en más del 85% de la importación de alimentos para subsistir, este cierre es una amenaza a nuestra sustentabilidad.

Teniendo en cuenta que los jóvenes que se han empecinado en quedarse para desarrollar el país, están creando fincas agroecológicas que se benefician de los estudios del recinto de Utuado. Por lo tanto este cierre es un ataque directo a esa juventud.

Pero el último capítulo aún no se ha escrito y los jóvenes universitarios son conocidos por su combatividad. □



Desde Puerto Rico para RADIO CLARÍN de Colombia, les habló Berta Joubert-Ceci

23 de diciembre de 2010: Estudiantes y simpatizantes en Puerto Rico se manifestaron contra la presencia policial en la UPR y contra la cuota de 800 dólares que la administración de la UPR quiere imponer a los estudiantes.

#STRIKETOBER! The working class rises up

Continued from page 1

Union (BCTCM) — are on strike in Battle Creek, Michigan, and in Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. Kellogg's CEO Steven Cahillane is collecting \$11.6 million this year but doesn't want to pay Kellogg's workers a living wage.

• 1,100 members of the United Mine Workers are continuing their strike in Alabama against Warrior Met Coal that began April 1. The striking miners have come to New York City to confront BlackRock — that controls \$9 trillion in assets — and other big investors in Warrior Met to demand an end to their strikebreaking.

• 2,000 Catholic Health workers are on strike at three hospitals in Buffalo, New York, while 800 nurses are on strike at St. Vincent Hospital in Worcester, Massachusetts. Like the Kaiser workers on the West Coast, these essential workers are demanding more staffing for their patients. The nurses in Worcester are up against the Tenet Healthcare chain that runs 65 hospitals. Despite getting \$1 billion in federal stimulus funds and a \$1.5 billion advance on Medicare payments, Tenet laid off a tenth of its workforce in 2019. These layoffs certainly didn't help fight the coronavirus.

Fifty years of attacks

Is this current strike wave just accidental? Or is it the start of something big?

Working and poor people in the U.S. have been pushed back since the 1970s. Taking inflation into account, average real wages have been frozen since 1978.

Meanwhile, 724 U.S. billionaires grabbed another \$1.2 trillion during

the COVID-19 pandemic. Part of Microsoft founder Bill Gates' \$124 billion stash is invested in strikebreaking John Deere.

Thousands of union strongholds were destroyed. The biggest victims of this deliberate deindustrialization were Black workers. They accounted for a quarter of U.S. auto workers and steel workers in 1970.

The median income of Black families in the Midwest plunged 36% between 1978 and 1982. The Black majority city of Detroit became the poorest big city in the United States.

Instead of young workers being concentrated in factories and other large workplaces, they were instead railroaded to the big prisons. Since 1970, the prison population has increased seven times. Prisoners are also part of the working class.

Now closed, the A.O. Smith auto frame plant in Milwaukee once employed more than 7,000 workers. Half of these workers were Black. This factory bordered the 53206 ZIP code where 62% of Black men are or have been incarcerated.

Looking at strike statistics also shows how poor and working people were thrown back. In 1970 and 1971 there were around 2.5 million workers on strike, including big strikes against General Motors and General Electric.

The United Farmworkers Union conducted strikes of Latinx, Filipino and Arab workers.

In 1974, there were 424 strikes that involved 1,000 or more workers. (The Bureau of Labor Statistics unfortunately doesn't give figures for strikes of less than a thousand workers.)

The number of these strikes fell to 96 in 1982, 35 in 1992 and just five strikes in 2009. It rebounded slightly to 25 strikes in 2019.

Fighting back

The willingness of many workers to go on strike or just quit their jobs isn't an isolated phenomenon. It's linked to the 26 million people who marched last year to demand Black Lives Matter!

The struggles of Indigenous peoples and their allies against environmentally destructive oil pipelines are part of this fightback. So is the struggle in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico against LUMA, the privatized electric company.

While the current number of strikes is smaller than during the working class upsurge of the 1930s, they're just as courageous. The communist leader and workers' organizer, Vince Copeland, described in 1970 how hard it is for workers to rebel:

"When a few dozen workers in a sweatshop first take fate in their hands and embark upon a strike, they have to go through a revolution in their own spirits; they have to take a chance on losing their livelihood altogether, especially if there has been no union in their shop before, and if they do not succeed in getting recognition from their boss.

"That is why it is so hard to organize the workers even on the elemental level of joining together to prevent the heel of capital from grinding them down altogether, much less organizing to overthrow imperialism and establish socialism.

"When workers lose even one hour's wages, it is often too much



PHOTO: MEMPHIS LABOR COUNCIL/FACEBOOK

In an interview, an African American woman in Battle Creek, Michigan, reportedly said that at Kellogg's, a global company, "while we prepare food for the world, we're unable to take off from work to feed our children." Kellogg's workers are being told just minutes before the end of their shift that they have to work more hours. See interview with Clarence Thomas on page 1.

of a sacrifice. Those who are eternally in debt, eternally paying for the washing machine, the furniture or the family automobile, hesitate to take off a day when they are really quite ill; how do they feel when they must face a strike of weeks' and possibly several months' duration? (From "Revolutionary implications of the GM strike.")

Today's strikes of thousands can lead to organizing millions of workers at Amazon, FedEx, Target and Walmart. The army of home health aides can win union wages and benefits and so can the millions employed in auto body shops, hotels, nursing homes and restaurants.

Two, three many Striketobers! □

STRUGGLE ★ LA LUCHA
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